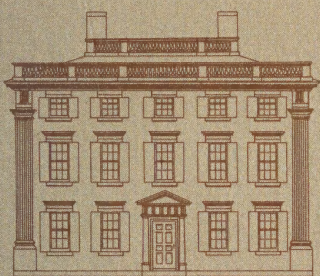
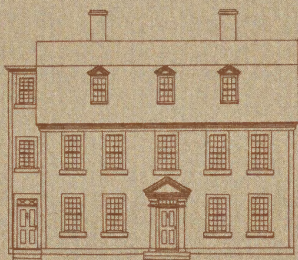


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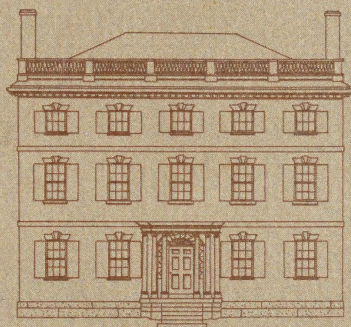
## Historic House Booklet Series



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
Crowninshield-Bentley



Gardner-Pingree

EDITED BY

Anne Farnam and Bryant F. Tolles, Jr.

Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts  1978







# THE CROWNINSHIELD- BENTLEY HOUSE

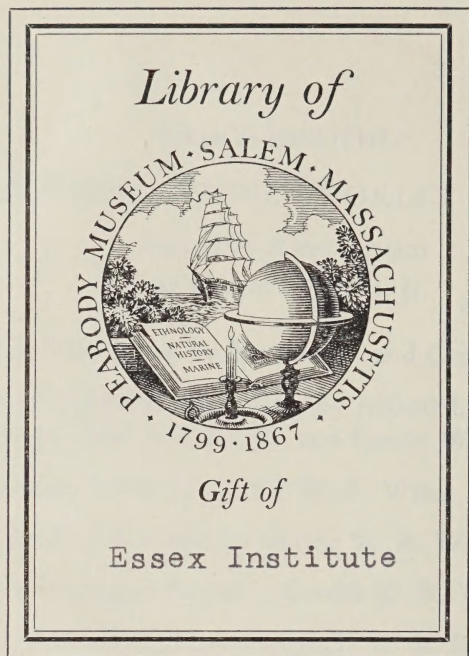


BY ABBOTT LOWELL CUMMINGS  
DEAN A. FALES, JR., & GERALD W. R. WARD

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: The Crowninshield-Bentley House (1727), 126 Essex Street, Salem, south front facade. Photograph by Richard Merrill, 1975.



# The Crowninshield- Bentley House

Historic House Booklet Number Two



BY ABBOTT LOWELL CUMMINGS  
DEAN A. FALES, JR., & GERALD W. R. WARD

FOREWORD BY BRYANT F. TOLLES, JR.

Essex Institute · Salem · Massachusetts · 1976

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## Foreword

FOUNDED in 1848 by the merging of the Essex Historical Society (incorporated in 1821) and the Essex County Natural History Society (incorporated in 1836), the Essex Institute is one of America's oldest and most venerable regional historical societies. The Institute is supported almost entirely by private funds, and is composed of the James Duncan Phillips research library, a museum of American fine and decorative arts, and a group of seven period houses, six of which are open to the public. The Institute's collections include books, pamphlets, periodicals, graphic materials, furniture, paintings, and other decorative and historic objects associated with the civil history and the people of Essex County, Massachusetts, since the early seventeenth century. Through its varied treasures, collected over many generations, the Essex Institute is uniquely able to recount the life and culture of one of the most historically important areas in the northeastern United States.

Of its many fascinating possessions and programs, the Essex Institute has been perhaps most widely associated with the maintenance and interpretation of its historic house properties. One of the nation's first private organizations to enter the field of historic preservation, the Institute acquired and relocated its first historic house property—the John Ward House (1684)—in 1910, and has added to its collection of representative local domestic architecture over the years since. Today, the Institute boasts a nationally significant group of historic dwellings which span sequentially the history of residential architecture in Salem from the era of its early settlement and growth in the seventeenth century to the mid-Victorian period.

Three years ago, under the guidance of my predecessor, David B. Little, a project was initiated to research and compile an updated series of illustrated articles treating each of the Institute's houses. From January 1974 to April 1976 these articles, written by Boston University doctoral

candidates Gerald W. R. Ward and Barbara M. Ward, appeared individually in the Institute's quarterly *Historical Collections*. Now, thanks to a generous grant from the McCarthy Family Foundation Charity Fund, it is possible to make the Ward articles, expanded and supplemented with other material, available in reasonably priced pamphlets for general distribution.

None of this, of course, could have been possible without the painstaking efforts of the authors; the museum and library staff; my assistant, Katherine W. Richardson; and my coeditor, Institute curator Anne Farnam. We hope that the readers of these pamphlets will profit educationally from them and will experience the same enjoyment from the subject matter as did those of us involved in the editorial process. The printed word or the photograph cannot do complete justice, however, to the houses themselves; they and their rich contents must be directly experienced for one to appreciate their merit as documents of the American past.

BRYANT F. TOLLES, JR.  
*Director, Essex Institute*



## The House: Its Structure and Its People

By ABBOTT LOWELL CUMMINGS\*

**D**URING the late winter and spring of 1960 Salem witnessed the transformation through restoration of a familiar Essex Street landmark which had served in recent years as a bakery and tenement. Painted a dull battleship gray, and with its front wall disfigured by shop windows, there was little to set it apart from other buildings in the neighborhood. Only the keen-eyed observer might have noticed details which would indicate that the house had any real age. No more than a handful of historians were aware that it had been the home for nearly thirty years of one of Salem's best known ministers and diarists, the Rev. William Bentley, whose fame has spread far beyond the immediate limits of the city.

The Rev. William Bentley, D.D., born in 1759, came to Salem in 1783 as pastor of its East Church and occupied that pulpit until his death in 1819. Pastor, politician, linguist, naturalist, antiquarian—there is hardly any current of thought, any local event in this richly interesting period which escaped his attention. His name is not perhaps as well known as that of Samuel Sewall or of John Quincy Adams, but the diary which he kept during the adult years of his life is no less important than the diaries of those more celebrated men. To many students, in fact, Bentley's is considered the most important New England diary.

\* Dr. Cummings is Executive Director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. An authority on seventeenth-century architecture, he is on the teaching staff of the American and New England Studies Program at Boston University.

Covering the epochal first years of the newly created United States, the four volumes of closely printed pages present a thoroughly comprehensive chronicle of an era. Over and over again his graphic entries bring us into intimate contact with a remote people and with the normally unrecorded events of their lives.

A scholar-clergyman with an amazingly catholic mind, Bentley embodied the great cultural awakening of the time in which he lived. As a linguist he was unexcelled in this country; he was a pioneer in natural history; science, mathematics, philosophy, the arts, literature, and history were all subjects he knew well. Salem during the post-Revolutionary period was undergoing the most dramatic and colorful growth of its history and was fortunate to have living in its midst the alert and observant Dr. Bentley whose breadth of interests enabled him to follow every phase of the development of the town. Looking out from his pulpit or from his bachelor quarters in Mrs. Crowninshield's house, Bentley viewed his town and his times, recording in his diary the development of one of the great seaports of Massachusetts.

Living in a time of political, scientific, and cultural awakening in the new nation, Bentley kept in touch with most of the intellectual currents of his day by means of a voluminous correspondence with prominent men of America, Europe, and Africa. In his clear handwriting he maintained friendships with political leaders such as Jefferson, John Adams, and Madison, sometimes writing to them of local problems which he hoped would be favored with presidential action, or informing them of new books which he had imported for his instructive use and theirs.

During Bentley's lifetime new and far-flung geographic and intellectual frontiers had been crossed and explored with enthusiasm. Never again, perhaps, would Salem live through such an exciting period, or be recorded by such an able observer.<sup>1</sup>

The house in which the Rev. Bentley lived and died was known locally as a Crowninshield house. It was originally built by the father and grandfather of those members of the Crowninshield family who were to achieve for themselves a renown which would also spread far beyond Salem into foreign ports throughout the world.

1. Portions of this brief history of Bentley are taken from "William Bentley: An Extraordinary Boarder," by Julia Paxton Barrow. Mrs. Barrow's article appeared in the April 1961 issue of the *Essex Institute Historical Collections*.



Restored now in nearly every major aspect and relocated on the grounds of the Essex Institute it has traveled no more than half a block from its original site and continues to face south. Like many houses which have grown in size from generation to generation it is larger than it was when first built. These changes and additions have raised some questions concerning restoration policy, especially as they affect the exterior, and here one finds finish trim of a later period. In order to understand these changes, however, and to follow the history of the house in any detail, it is necessary to begin with a study of the Crowninshields themselves.

The first of the name in Salem, Bentley tells us on June 16, 1815, was "Johannes Caspar Richter Crowninshield who came here from Germany in 1684."<sup>2</sup> When his will was probated December 31, 1711, he is called "John von Cronenshilt late of Boston . . . Physician," but this spelling was soon anglicized and his children consistently bore the name as we know it today. Among these were three sons by his wife, Elizabeth Allen, all of whom left descendants: John, born in Boston January 19, 1696; Clifford, born in Boston December 10, 1699, and died in Salem April 4, 1776 (though "no male of his name remains," Bentley writes in 1815); and Richard, who was born in Boston December 28, 1708, married in 1734, and settled in Attleboro, Massachusetts.

John Crowninshield, the eldest son, was married to Anstis Williams on September 27, 1722. He was a merchant in Salem engaged in the fish business, but also, apparently, followed the sea. In 1727, five years after his marriage, he acquired two adjoining lots of land on Essex Street at the head of Union Street, and must have begun building at once, for the style of the earliest portion of the Crowninshield-Bentley House is consistent with other houses in Essex County erected early in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Bentley, on August 4, 1818, speaks of it as having been "built nearly a Century ago. . . ."

Though the plan was not typical of the average seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century house John Crowninshield did take advantage of the traditional central chimney scheme. To the right of a spacious entry with staircase ascending in three easy stages to the second floor there was a large room or hall with a good-sized fireplace in the north

2. For the Bentley Diary and Probate Court records, page references have been eliminated inasmuch as the dates and case names serve to identify the quotations.

wall. To the left of the fireplace a narrow passageway led to the rear kitchen. In this same area was the great chimney which served both these rooms, and against which a second narrow flight of stairs led to the second story. Beneath this flight, and also entered from the passageway, were stairs to the cellar. Above these rooms were corresponding chambers and passageways.

One important (and perplexing) question upon which investigation has shed little if any light is the chronology of the western half of the house with its own separate chimney. At first glance a number of structural peculiarities would imply that it had been added to the original house at a somewhat later date, perhaps around 1750. The supporting timbers of the first floor, as seen in the cellar, have been put together in a way that suggest such a possibility. There are no summer beams visible in the ceilings of the western rooms, and the delicate detail of the chimney breast in the western attic chamber could hardly be much before 1750 in terms of style.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, when the building had been stripped of its outer covering there were none of the telltale evidences of an addition to be found: no break in either the exterior boarding or front sill (both of which, of course, could be later replacements), or any butting of one structural unit against another, and while the detail of the western attic chamber may seem later, the raised paneling in the chamber below is very similar to that in the original eastern chamber. It is hard to visualize, moreover, how the house might have looked originally as a "half-house" covered with a gambrel roof to which was attached at right angles a slightly narrower ell covered with a pitched roof. The resulting arrangement, rather awkwardly L-shaped, is not typical of houses which have survived, and can be explained only, it would seem, if we assume that an addition (which if it was not a part of the original house) was planned to come along within a very few years. At all events, the western rooms were in existence by 1761 when they are mentioned in the inventory of John Crowninshield's estate.

John and Anstis Crowninshield reared a large family in this house. The first of their children were twin girls, Elizabeth and Anstis, born April 8, 1727. Elizabeth died a month or so later, but Anstis lived until November 22, 1768, and was twice married. The first son, John, was

3. It is quite possible, of course, that this attic chamber was not immediately finished off when the western half of the house was built.



born December 21, 1728, and died June 24, 1766. He was a merchant and built and occupied the house (in which Nathaniel Bowditch was born) two doors west of the East Church. The third daughter, Sarah, was born April 30, 1730, and died October 8, 1793, having married in 1758. The next son was Jacob, born January 9, 1733, of whom more later, followed by George, born August 6, 1734, and died June 16, 1815. The next daughter, Elizabeth, was born February 23, 1736, and died April 19, 1799. On April 23, 1761, she was married to the renowned Elias Hasket Derby whose sister, Mary Derby (1737-1813) had married George Crowninshield on July 18, 1757. By these marriages two of Salem's most prominent mercantile families were doubly tied together.

Of the younger children there was a son, Benjamin, born March 26, 1737, who died at sea in 1762, and a daughter, Mary, born October 8, 1740, and died May 18, 1819. She was married on September 23, 1760, to Henry Elkins, and is remembered largely as the woman with whom the Rev. William Bentley boarded during his earliest years in Salem. Just before moving to the Crowninshield House he writes on February 28, 1791, "Preparing to remove from M<sup>rs</sup> Elkins', with whom I have boarded ever since my ordination, & occasionally from the May preceeding, wanting only two months of eight years."

Jacob Crowninshield was a shipmaster and married, March 30, 1756, Hannah, the daughter of Samuel and Deborah (Stevens) Carlton. She was born July 26, 1734, and died May 14 or 23, 1824, aged ninety. Eventually the family home descended to Jacob as the oldest surviving son, but one wonders where the young couple lived during their early married years. The lower east front room is not mentioned in the inventory of the father John's estate, and perhaps it is here they kept house.<sup>4</sup> It has not always been one large room, judging from evidence in the ceiling which would suggest a partition running east and west to make of this area two more or less equal-sized rooms. The partition itself has long since disappeared, with no indication of when it may have been introduced. On the assumption that it had not been original no effort was made in the restoration to replace it.

Following Capt. John Crowninshield's death on May 25, 1761, an inventory of his estate was taken which gives some inkling of how the

4. The births of Jacob's and Hannah's three children, however, ranging from 1758 to 1763, are not recorded in Salem, and they may have been located out of town during these years.

rooms were used by the family. The "Western lower Room" contained an assortment of fine furniture and china, together with some fairly elegant pieces of silver and "8 framed Picktures carved"—obviously the best parlor. The "Kitchen" held a full complement of cooking utensils as well as "9 Picktures" and a number of candlesticks which could be carried into other parts of the house as needed. The "Westermost Chamber" was clearly the parents' best bedroom. It had a "Case w<sup>t</sup>. Drawers" and "a Chamber Table" (probably a matching highboy and lowboy as they are called today), a bedstead with curtains, and "a Callico Quilt" together with "His wearing Apparel." In the "Kitchen Chamber" at the rear of the house was another bedstead with curtains and valance, "2 Cotton Counterpins," and "a blew Bed Quilt." In the "Eastern Chamber" there were two bedsteads without curtains, "an old Bedsted," and "a Pallat D<sup>o</sup>." With this number of beds in the room one is not surprised to find that "a Chest w<sup>t</sup>. Drawers" is about the only other item of furniture mentioned. Although most of the children were by this time married and presumably established in homes of their own, it was no more than a decade since the family had numbered ten in all and these many beds would not have seemed superfluous! Finally, in the "Garret" there was still another bedstead with "Curtains Head Cloth & Tester," presumably in the western finished chamber. The dwelling house itself, incidentally, with Barn and "Out Houses" was appraised at £666.13.4, and the estate included "a Negro Man" at £66.13.4 and a "Negro Woman" at £40.

There is an interesting reference in Bentley's diary, September 13, 1807, to negro servants in the family at a somewhat later period: "This day we lost unexpectedly our most worthy black servant Jack. He was brought into this country by Capt. Foster of Manchester, & then purchased by Mr. Deland of Salem [in 1754 when he was thought to be eleven years old], & married the negro woman of Mrs. H[annah] Crowninshield in whose family I live. He took his freedom at the revolution as all Negroes did & followed his Master's trade as a truckman, 'till old age overtook him, having gained a house, horses & trucks as his own." More recently, Bentley continues, "he has not had such ample means as before & has returned to our house to perform such little services as were in his power & to receive a great part of his support."

John Crowninshield's estate was not finally settled until after the death of his son, Capt. John, Jr., on June 24, 1766. On November 4 of



that year a committee of three, appointed by the Probate Court, set off to the widow, Anstis Crowninshield, "the Western Part of the Mansion House . . . with the yard & Land adjoining. . . ." The line was to run through "the middle of the Front Door . . . thence northerly through the middle of the Entry Way one hundred & twenty Feet to a Stake in the Fence at the Training Field. . . ." Included was a "Priviledge of one half the Stair Way and the Western Part of the Cellar as it is now petitioned off. . . ."

By this time all of John and Anstis Crowninshield's living children were married and apparently Jacob and Hannah inherited the whole eastern part of the house. To them were born three children, Benjamin, on February 16, 1758; John, on November 24, 1761; and Hannah, on January 18, 1763. John married Sarah, the daughter of Daniel and Rachel (Phelps) Hathorne who were also the grandparents of the novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and died without issue February 19, 1786. Hannah, the only daughter, never married and lived at home until her death on April 9, 1832. When the widow Anstis Crowninshield died on September 10, 1774, the house in its entirety came into the possession of Jacob, but he survived his mother no more than a month or two, dying on November 15, 1774, in passage from Jamaica.

Once again there was delay in settlement and again the house was divided by the Probate Court. On November 28, 1788, there was set off to the widow, Hannah Crowninshield, as her dower, "the Eastern End of Said . . . dwelling house with the Land under & Adjoining it. . . ." In this case the line was described as running south from the Training Field "to a Stake in y<sup>e</sup> back Yard (near y<sup>e</sup> back door) thence Southerly through the Midle of the Great Entry to the midle of the front door . . . the well, the necessary house in garden, to gather with the Front door, Great Entry, and Stair way in said Entry to the Garret (Except the Small Chamber in S<sup>d</sup>. Entry which belongs to the west End of y<sup>e</sup> house) to be in Common to both Parts of the House, reserving to the west End of the house a Privilidg of the use of the Outer Celler door, & a Passage throug the Eastern Celler, to the Celler under the west End of the house. . . ."

Here in the eastern half of the old house, the widow Hannah Crowninshield and her daughter Hannah continued to live and here they kept boarders for many years. Among these was the printer William Carlton, the Widow Hannah's nephew. An interesting bit of folklore is found in

an early manuscript note in the collections of the Institute, penned not too many years after Washington's visit to Salem in 1789, telling us that Washington came to this house to call upon W. Carlton who had been one of his generals.<sup>5</sup> Another boarder, according to an entry in Bentley's diary, would have been Capt. Benjamin Orne. But it is the Rev. Bentley himself, never married, whose long residence here has brought widespread fame to the house and given to it, in modern times, the honor of his name. Nearly all of the Crowninshields were parishioners of his, and having lived with another member of the family since coming to Salem he records on February 14, 1791, "Made a contract with Hannah Crowninshield for the use of her Chamber for my separate use, & boarding, & washing to be done under her care, eighteen shillings, I having the privilege of every usual family meal whether customarily asked by me or not, & liberty to accommodate a friend occasionally by night & by day." Later he notes, "On the first day of March, I removed from Mary Elkin's opposite the Meeting, to Hannah Crowninshield opposite Long Wharf Lane. Agreeably to the contract of the 14th ult, I am to be entertained. By courtesy I have the western upper Chamber to lodge in." There is no mention in the diary of his moving into the large front chamber, but it is noted in at least one roughly contemporary report that it was here he lived during the later years at least.<sup>6</sup>

Bentley came to Salem too late to have known Capt. Jacob Crowninshield whose estate was now judged insolvent. The Widow Hannah as administratrix was obliged in 1791 to sell the western half of the house to her sister-in-law's husband, Elias Hasket Derby. Derby in turn, on April 11 of the same year, sold it to Jacob's son Benjamin Crowninshield, shipmaster, and later collector of the port at Marblehead. He had married Mary Lambert November 9, 1780, and it is clear that the young couple were living here through most if not all the years before Capt. Benjamin acquired the title outright. In 1785, and again in 1792, in lists of his church members, Bentley locates Capt. Benjamin Crowninshield in the "Street" or "Great Street," the entry in both cases being

5. Since William Carlton, the printer, was born in 1771, the author of this note must have been referring to his uncle, Samuel Carlton (1731-1804), a colonel under Washington in the Revolution, or possibly to his father, Capt. William Carlton (1744-1791).

6. Benjamin F. Browne, "An Account of Salem Common and the Levelling of the Same in 1802, With Short Notices of the Subscribers," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 4 (December 1962):265.



next to that of his mother, the Widow Hannah. Although the business arrangements were entirely with Mrs. Crowninshield in her separate, eastern half of the house, Bentley often speaks of the son Benjamin as his landlord. "My landlord Capt. Crowninshield sailed," he notes on March 24, 1799, and again, on July 29, 1801: "My Landlord, B. Crowninshield, has returned after 8 months detention in Alquizeras."

In spite of these seafaring absences from home Benjamin and Mary raised a number of children in the western half of the house: Benjamin, born 1782 (?) and died November 30, 1862; Maria, bp. June 28, 1789, who married on April 4, 1814, John Crowninshield (her first cousin once removed), the son of George; Hannah, also bp. on June 28, 1789, who married March 29, 1819, James Armstrong of the United States Navy; Elizabeth, bp. November 16, 1794; and Jacob, born February 15, 1799, who died July 15, 1849. This was the family which Bentley knew intimately and of which he wrote so often. It is little wonder that as its numbers increased some of his entries should relate to an expansion of the house itself. On March 20, 1794, he records: "B. Crowninshield, new back part of his House in the Street, &c.," a date which is in perfect accord with the style of the large western rear room and chambers above. The addition included as well a separate staircase and entry which project at the west end of the house in the form of a "Beverly jog." As a result of these changes the house exchanged its L-shaped form for one which nearly approached a square in plan. The roof of the newly added portion fell away from the main ridge of the house in a single pitch, creating the effect of a lean-to as viewed from the west. A new set of flues was butted against the rear of the original western chimney to serve the new rooms, and this addition to the chimney, together with the original north slope of the gambrel roof with early, if not original, shingles are preserved in the rear attic of the western half of the house under the later (and higher) lean-to roof.

Three months later, in June of 1794, Bentley adds a further note: "B. Crowninshield, entire repairs in the Street." With these "repairs" the house must have assumed the aspect it has worn throughout the nineteenth century to the present time, aside from the obvious later changes in the first floor street front and the addition of modern ells at the rear (removed during the restoration). The detail of window frames in the 1794 addition, for example, are matched by those throughout the rest of the house, and from this period, too, would date the present

cornice. Obviously Capt. Benjamin updated the whole outside of the house to match his new rooms and these exterior changes of the late eighteenth century have not been altered in restoration. All the sash have been restored, replacing relatively modern window glass, and follow a pattern of twelve over twelve panes, the arrangement shown in a late nineteenth-century photograph of the house. The details of the muntins are based on a single surviving late eighteenth-century sash found in place in the east gable of the attic. The front entrance had been altered, probably in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and has been restored, using an early paneled door from an old house in Beverly. The classical frontispiece copies a late eighteenth-century example at 118 Boston Street in Salem.

Although these changes were made in what we think of as the Federal period, the detail, especially within doors, follows the prevailing style of the 1780s, with a continuing use of feather-edged paneling and eared overmantel panels. It should be remembered, however, that the first of the houses of Salem's leading architect, Samuel McIntire, to break away entirely from an earlier style and reflect the new Adamesque trends of the Federal period was the Nathan Dean House in Salem, built only one year before.

We can easily follow the familiar stages as Capt. Benjamin's children grew from childhood—all seen through the eyes of the benign Dr. Bentley. He tells us in 1798, for instance, that all of the children were absent from home, undergoing inoculation for smallpox at the "Hospital, Great Pasture, Salem." On September 17, 1808, he reports having sent specimens of the penmanship of young Benjamin, Jr., and his sister Hannah to President Jefferson in Washington and tells us on January 6, 1809, of Jefferson's reply:

I have certainly never seen anything in either way equally perfect, & I esteem them as models which will not, I believe be exceeded. . . . Be so good as to present to the young artists the assurances of my thankfulness for these acceptable proofs of their uncommon talents. If my testimony of their eminence can be any gratification to them it is offered with sincerity as justly due to them.

A few years earlier, on October 9, 1804, he mentions an event which must have concerned the entire household—as it would today. This

was the famous October Gale of that year (in which the original steeple of Christ Church in Boston was blown down): "It was the heaviest blow ever known in Salem & it will be remembered as the Violent Storm of 9 October 1804. We had thunder & lightning all day. We lost the Railing from the top of the house in which I live. It was totally destroyed."

Later, on April 4, 1814, he notes that "Capt. John Crowninshield was married to a Gd. of my Landlady at our house this afternoon. Much is expected from this match by all parties." But it was Capt. Benjamin's daughter, Hannah, of whom Bentley has the most to say. Again and again throughout the diary there are references to her growing accomplishments and his efforts to develop these in every way he could, to their many instructive trips together and pleasant social outings. Her artistic abilities interested him in particular, and the Peabody Museum has a number of her very meticulous drawings, including a miniature portrait of Bentley after his death, and her painting box. Perhaps his feeling for this unusual young lady and the exceptional quality of their relationship are best summed up in a long entry, penned just a few months before his death in 1819. On March 29 he writes,

This day I passed through the most interesting scene of my life. I came to the family of H. C[rowninshield] in 1791. In 1789 I had baptised Hannah, d. of Benj. & Mary Crowninshield, two years before I came into the family, tho I had before lived in a branch of it. As soon as Hannah the g.d. was of age for instruction she was put into my care. She has rewarded it with her virtues & accomplishments. This day I delivered her in marriage to an officer of the Navy. He is from Virginia, but to me unknown. What the prospects are I cannot guess. The event is not from my wishes or at my will. The sympathy was beyond description. The hundred I have united never gave such emotion. I knew nothing contrary to the hopes of the young man & that is the evil. . . . The branches of the family were represented on the occasion & after the ceremonies H. retired to her Father's in Danvers. . . . Thus after nearly 30 years all our hopes are unknown. Why did not so accomplished girl find a bosom friend in Salem. . . . I hope H. will be happy. It will be my happiness. My best wishes attend her.



One long connected phase in the history of the house was drawing to a close and these were final scenes. Capt. Benjamin Crowninshield had removed his family about 1811 to the farm in Danversport to which Bentley refers and now in this same year of Hannah's marriage, 1819, the diarist's own life came to an end on Wednesday evening, December 29. He had been visiting one of his parishioners, Capt. James Fairfield, and returned about 10 o'clock. Another member of his parish has described for us the events of the next few moments:

It was his custom before retiring to call on the old lady and bid her "good night." Leaning on the back of her chair he was telling her what a pleasant and interesting party it was, when he stopped, and asked her daughter, Miss Hannah, for a glass of water. She handed it as quickly as possible. He took it, raised it to his lips and fell.<sup>7</sup>

A young storekeeper who worked in the neighborhood and who came running across the street in response to Mrs. Crowninshield's outcry has left a touching comment on this pastor's place in the hearts of his friends and parishioners:

Here died a man who with all his eccentricities, and they were many, was a noble specimen of humanity. . . . During the 3 years that I kept opposite to him, I sent by his order and by his payment, frequently, supplies of groceries and other necessities to poor persons, some of them not of his own parish, with strict orders that it should not be known who sent them. "Take him for all in all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again."<sup>8</sup>

Only the two Hannahs now remained. During the year 1818 Bentley had written of an attempt on the part of the "Hon. Mr. Silsbee" to acquire this Crowninshield property, "but the present incumbent, Widow of Jacob," he tells us, "would not resign it hoping to keep it for John, son of George, who had married her G. Daughter." This hope did not materialize, and following the deaths of these last Crowninshields, the Widow Hannah and her daughter, the house passed out of

7. Marguerite Dalrymple, "An Address on Rev. William Bentley, written in her 87th year," *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D.* (Salem, 1905), 1:xxxvi.

8. From the notebook kept by Benjamin F. Browne, and reprinted in Bentley's *Diary*, 4:638.

the family into other hands. It continued to change hands with separate ownership of each half until the 1940s when both were bought by a single individual and resold to Hotel Hawthorne through whose generosity the building was acquired by the Institute.

\* \* \*

Fortunately there had been little change within doors throughout the nineteenth century, and much original trim remained intact. The work of restoration can be summarized largely as paring away later material and recovering the original color scheme.

In the western parlor a later door and shop window were replaced with window openings in their original positions, the details of which were copied from other windows in the same room. Brass box locks have been added to the doors where marks in the woodwork indicated that such locks had once existed. Whatever the original woodwork may have been like it is clear that all the present trim dates from the period of Capt. Benjamin Crowninshield's repairs and alterations in 1794. The first paint color is a light green, but the second coat, an early putty color, has been reproduced while the door into the entry has been carefully scraped to reveal original walnut graining which may well have been the finish of the original woodwork throughout the room.

A small closet of later date was removed from under the stair landing, and while little evidence existed concerning the original finish of the rear wall under the stairs, there seemed to be some indication that a door may have existed here at one time. For the convenience of a future custodian such a door has been installed, the early two-panel door which had been reused in connection with the later closet fitting the space exactly. Eighteenth-century paint evidence in this entry revealed an early ochre with simple variegated graining and a baseboard finished with an almost black mahogany color, all of which has been restored.

The front room on the right had suffered perhaps as much as any area in the house. The dado surviving along the east and west walls and window trim date to the period of the late eighteenth-century, and across the north wall there was found nothing but later plaster and a very late mantel of perhaps the 1840s. Behind this only a few scraps of the original wall finish could be found. Enough remained, however, to show that raised panels had probably existed here as in the chamber above. Surrounding the fireplace there had been a heavy bolelection

molding, the width of which was clearly indicated by marks in the original trim. The pattern of the paneling has been restored on the basis of houses of this period with similar paneling in the area, and while the late eighteenth-century woodwork of the room has as its underlying original coat of paint the same green which appears in the western parlor, those few surviving scraps of original woodwork reveal that this room was early painted an Indian red. The door into the entry has this same early coat of red paint, though it has been overpainted with an interesting piece of graining, perhaps around 1800. Modern paint has been carefully scraped to expose this graining, while the room itself with its restored features has been painted the red color of the original woodwork.

In the passageway between the front room and the kitchen the main problem was stripping away later woodwork which had converted the stairway into a closet, and replacing two or three of the missing stair treads. In the kitchen, however, the matter was somewhat more complex. A later fireplace and oven had been introduced, at which time the lintel of the original opening had been removed altogether. Its exact size and position were still indicated in the masonry, and both ovens were found intact at the rear. Most exciting of all was the discovery, in place, of the original cast-iron fireback which, though broken into three pieces, has been carefully welded and returned to its original position. The marks of a similar fireback, long since removed from the house, were found when the fireplace in the front room was opened.

A later partition had been introduced in the kitchen immediately to the left of the door from the passageway, and this was removed. Marks in the floor and wall indicated the presence of a doorway which led originally from the kitchen into the small closet, probably a buttery, which forms part of the passageway area, and this has all been reconstituted. The area above the doorway appears to have been open, as found. The grillwork has been introduced on the basis of analogy with similar examples elsewhere.

The sill of a door was found in the west wall, possibly the "back door" spoken of in the partition of the estate in 1788 before the western rear addition had been made. No trace of the door itself remains and the partition (because of the later addition) has been restored as a blank wall. The remaining walls were found to have been plastered and whitewashed with a black-painted dado which has been restored. Some



marks of earlier shelving remain in the plaster (though not restored) both on the south and east walls. The little cupboard with butterfly hinges over the fireplace had long since been papered over and its existence unsuspected until repairs to the fireplace wall were begun. The cupboard itself was found bare, but the person who closed it for the last time thoughtfully removed and placed on a shelf the little brass ring pull which now does service again.

In the kitchen chamber a later partition in the same position as that in the kitchen below had been introduced, and this was removed, revealing evidence of a door similar to that in the kitchen leading into the small closet area which is part of the passageway. This, too, has been restored, and the fireplace opened. In the passageway itself, leading to Bentley's chamber, the early occupants of the house had closed in with a board partition the stairs leading to the attic. Despite the ancient character of this work it was decided to take it out, exposing to view once again the open attic staircase which it was clear had been constructed originally in this form. The paint color in both the kitchen chamber and passageway was an early "lead" color. In one or two places on the staircase it had survived intact with no later layers superimposed.

In Bentley's room, the front eastern chamber, the bolection molding of the fireplace wall, together with the heavy mantel, had survived, and there were clear indications in the underlying sheathing of the fireplace wall of the exact pattern and size of the raised panels which have been restored. The paint color is the earliest found on the woodwork with the bolection and mantel painted in a different shade—as the evidence suggests. Here again later fireplaces were removed, revealing the original opening virtually intact.

In the western chamber and the rear western rooms little was necessary beyond the recovery of the original paint colors, in the western chamber a Prussian blue, and elsewhere a putty color. In the western attic chamber, however, certain changes had been made which altered somewhat the original character of the area. The upper landing of the main attic staircase had been enclosed with a later door (which was removed though the later boarding in of the uppermost run of stairs was left in place), and on reaching the attic one was confronted with a much later finished room at the left and a blank wall in the right. This blank wall was part of a closet which could be entered only from the western attic chamber. This left the upper chamber with no other en-

trance than that which opened onto the rear staircase in the Beverly jog. The closet wall, it was quickly determined, was of nineteenth-century vintage, and was removed, allowing access once again to this attic chamber from the front entry. The chamber door, however, had been made higher when transformed into a closet door, and has now been restored to its correct proportions, following clear indications of the original size in the surviving trim. The original woodwork of the chimney breast was virtually intact, requiring only the removal of the hot-air register from the paneling of one cupboard and the removal of some later boxing-in of the shelves in the cupboard opposite.

The house is a purely eighteenth-century building with details of the early, middle, and later decades. Salem is rich in houses of the seventeenth century and of the Federal period, but the eighteenth century has been relatively neglected. Yet this was a period of brisk maritime activity which set the stage for the spectacular era which was to follow. The Crowninshields and Dr. Bentley were principal actors upon this stage. Their portraits, their papers, and Dr. Bentley's diary all help to evoke a sense of immediacy in these past scenes, but the house itself, now fully restored and furnished, is in one sense our most tangible link with these important Salemites, now long gone.

*Early owners of the house*

1727-1761	John Crowninshield
1761-1774	Anstis Crowninshield (western part, 1766-1774)
1766-1774	Jacob Crowninshield (eastern part, whole house in 1774)
1774-1824	Hannah Carlton Crowninshield (eastern part, 1788-1824)
1791 - c. 1811	Benjamin Crowninshield (western part)
1824-1832	Hannah Crowninshield (eastern part)

## Additional Notes on the House

By GERALD W. R. WARD\*

JOHN CROWNINSHIELD (1696–1761) purchased the land on which he built his house in June and August of 1727. Lacking other evidence, this year has been accepted as the date of the building of the house.<sup>9</sup> Some notes made by a great-granddaughter of John Crowninshield, by the name of Babbidge, indicate that while the house was probably begun in 1727, it wasn't finished until 1729 or 1730.<sup>10</sup> This family historian, writing sometime after 1832, notes that, after John married Anstis Williams (1700–1774) in 1722, "they resided in the house . . . on the north side of Washington Square, then the common or training field, somewhere on the site of Williams and Fairfield streets." Twin children were born to John and Anstis in this house during 1727, and shortly after their birth Anstis

was much terrified at the first earthquake she had ever heard, she was lodged on the lower floor, as was the custom—she sprang from her bed and ran to meet her mother, at the back door of her house, who lived in the adjoining house, and their several doors were near together who informed her it was an earthquake. The shaking was very violent.

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9. The two best articles on the Crowninshield-Bentley House are by Abbott Lowell Cummings, "The House and Its People," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 97 (April 1961):82–97, and "History in Houses: The Crowninshield-Bentley House in Salem, Massachusetts," *The Magazine Antiques* 76 (October 1959):328–329.

10. This handwritten manuscript is entitled "Crowninshield family: Family genealogy and biography," and is preserved in the Crowninshield Family Manuscripts, Box 9, Folder 3, Essex Institute. The author was the daughter of Anstis Babbidge. All quotations in this section are from this manuscript.



Our author informs us that this distressing event occurred on “Sunday evening October 29, 1727, at 40 minutes past ten o’clock.”

Our author also notes that sometime later “Capt. John Crowninshield built his Mansion House in Essex [Street], facing Union St.” She adds, however, that “Sarah was the first child born there.” Sarah Crowninshield, the fourth child of John and Anstis, was born April 30, 1730. Their third child, named for his father, was born December 21, 1728, presumably in their old home near Williams Street. If this family tradition is to be accepted as valid, the Crowninshield-Bentley House must have been built between these two birthdates, most likely in 1729.

The inventory taken after John Crowninshield’s death in 1761 lists his worldly goods in great detail and in room-by-room order, and was of assistance when furnishing the restored house.<sup>11</sup> When John’s estate was finally settled in 1766, his widow, Anstis, received the western half of the house, and his eldest son, Jacob, fell heir to the eastern portion. Inventories of the estates of both these heirs were taken at the time of their deaths, and the household goods listed in them are included here. Anstis died in the fall of 1773 and Jacob passed away about a year later. Therefore, their combined possessions present a reasonably accurate picture of the total furnishings of the house.

*Anstis:*

a Clock	£10	Glass	17/	Desk	24/	14.14
Walnut Table	18/.	six Chairs	@ 4/			2.2
round Chair	8/	breakfast Table	3/			.11
4 oval Pictures	@ 1/4.	4 old Pictures	8d			.6
large Bible	24/.	Sermon Book	2/			1.6
Sundry old Books	5/.	a Quarter Waggoner	12/-			.17
Dog Irons	4/.	Tongs and 2 Shovels	4/			.8-
China Ware	4/.	Stone glass and Delph Ware	12/			.16-
Yarn & 3 [pr.?] Mittens	2/	Tin Sugar Chest	2/			.4-
40 [lbs.?] Coffee	@ 8d:	56 [lbs.?] old Pewter	@ 1/			4.2.8
1 Kitchen Table	3/.	1 Do	1/.	Handirons	6/8	.10.8
2 pr Tongs & 2 Shovels	6/	Tea kettle	5/			.11
Gridiron	2/.	Frying Pan	2/8.	3 Trammels	12/	.16.8

11. See Dean A. Fales, Jr., “The Furnishings of the House,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 97(April 1961):98-128 (which reprints John Crowninshield’s inventory in abstracted form on pp. 126-128), and “The Crowninshield-Bentley House in Salem—A Documentary Restoration,” *The Magazine Antiques* 88(October 1965):486-493.

brass Skimmer and Ladle 3/ Warming Pan 3/	.6-
Toast Iron 3/. Chaffing Dish 4/ Iron ladles, forks, &c 4/	.11-
Tender 3/. 2 Spits 5/. Jack 6/. 1 pr flat Irons 3/4	.17.4
2 brass Kettles 26 # @ 1/. small Pot and Cover 3/	1.9-
2 Iron Pots 5/. 2 Dish Kettles 5/4	.10.4
2 Iron Skillets 2/6. Bell Metal Skillet 7/.	.9.6
Ax 1/6 Saw 4/ Iron Wedges 5/ Spade 4/	.14.6
Scale Beam 24/. Cannipers 1/6	1.5.6
Tin Ware 12/ block tin Tea Pot 2/	.14
Coffee Mill 1/. Earthen Ware 3/	.4
8 # Chocolate @ 1/. 2 Pails Boxes &c 2/	.10-
Mortar 3/. knives and Forks 1/. 9 black Chairs @ 1/.	.13-
2 Sieves @ 1/. small Beam and Scales 8/	.10-
Weights 8/. Baskets and Trays 3/6	.11.6
Silvor Brush 1/ brass Mortar 1/ Cloth Lines 1/	.3-
Bellows 1/6. Bark 15/ Soap and Cask 8/	1.4.6
4 Dozen Bottles 8/. Beetle 2/8. Hatchet 2/	.12.8
old Casks 6/. 36 Gallon Molasses @ 1/2	2.8.-
2 Brooms 8d fire Buckets & Bag 12/	.12.8
Case of Draws £4. Chamber Table 36/	5.16
Glass 1/6. Easy Chair 40/ 4 Joiners Chairs @ 4/	2.17.6
great Chair 6/ small Trunk 1/	7
Bed, Bolster & 2 Pillows 81 # @ 1/4	5.8.-
Basket and two Bottles 2/. hair Trunk 6/	.8.
one Blanket 15/ 1 Ditto 3/	.18.
green Quilt 22/	1. 2.
green Curtains & Vallens, white inside Vallens head cloth & Tester 40/	2. -
Curtain Rods 6/. Stone and glass Ware 4/	.10-
Under Bed 6/ Corn Sieve 30/. Cleaver 2/	.11-
56 # Sugar 20/. Handirons 2/	1. 2-
one Bed, Bolster & 2 Pillows 50 # @ 1/4	3. 6.8
Under Bed 5/ Bedstead Sack Bottom 8/	.13.-
Bedstead & Cord 8/ Candlestand 2/	.10.-
1 Basket & Cover 2/. 1 Basket 8d	. 2.8
Callico Quilt 12/. 4 old Guns @ 6/ Saw 2/	1.18.-
Old Chest 2/. 2 blunder Busses 3/. 2 Mallets 3/	. 8.-

Old Iron 3/. one Bed 23 # @ 8d: 1 Do 25 # @ 8d	1.15.0
Bedstead 4/. under Bed 2/8. 2 old Rugs 2/	. 8.8
1 Blanket 1/ 3 old Chairs 1/ Chest & 2 bbl 1/	. 3-
3 Cod Leads 6/. Bedstead sack Bottom 12/	.18.
Old Plate 31 oz 10 pwts 6/8 Tankard	
25 oz 7.12. @ 8/	20.13-
Shovel & Hoe 1/8. old Pictures 2/8	. 4-
2 Piggs @ 26/8	2.13.4
brass Candlesticks & Snuffers 3/ Iron Do 8d	. 3.8
Negro Man	17. 6.8
Negro Woman	16—
Negro Girl	20—12

*Jacob:*

a glass £4 Clock £4.10/ Desk black walnut £2	10.10
mehogany Table 28/ ditto 28/ a Stand ditto 20/	3.16
7 Leather bottom Chairs 21 / 8 maple ditto 16/.	1.01
2 Candlestands 2/ 14 Glass Pictures 8/	.10
Glasses, China and delph ware in two Closets	1. 4
a gaging Rod 4/ 15 black chairs 22/ a Table 1/	1. 7
a Parcel of old Books 20/ a pr of Dogs & shovel and	
Tongs 8/	1. 8
8.o.o. Sugar @ 36/- £14.8 150 # Coffee @ 8d £5	19. 8

12. This inventory is in the Essex County Probate Records, Docket 6666, and Volume 350, leaves 118-20, and was taken on October 7, 1773.

It has been assumed that Anstis Crowninshield died on September 10, 1774, and this is the date given in the Salem vital records and in Cummings, "The House and Its People," p. 87. This would certainly seem to be in order, as her gravestone, still visible in the Charter Street Burying Ground, gives this date. However, a number of other documents indicate quite strongly that she died a year earlier than previously assumed, in other words, on September 10, 1773. Five documents in her docket at the probate court, including the inventory of her estate, refer to her as deceased long before September of 1774. An agreement dated August 1, 1774, between Elias Hasket Derby and Jacob Crowninshield concerning the settlement of the estate of Anstis Crowninshield, "deceased," is preserved in Volume 10, leaf 54, of the Derby Papers at the Essex Institute. Furthermore, an entry dated September 13, 1773, in a "Copy of a Fragment of an Account-Book Kept by Gibson Clough," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 15 (January-April 1878):64, reads: "Mrs. Anstes Crowninshield Buried with under Barrs and tolling ye Church Bell." Bentley also gives her year of death as 1773 (4:336). Because of all this evidence, we must conclude that the correct date of death for Anstis Crowninshield is September 10, 1773, although I must admit I cannot understand how a gravestone carver could have made such a mistake.



58.16.12 of Silver @ 6/8	£19.10.11.	2 Bolts of duck cut up for Sails	£6.	25.10.11
1 large brass Kettle 28/	1 smaller ditto 6/	1 smaller do 8/		2. 2
5 brass Vessels 10/	a pair of Iron Handirons and Tongs 12/			1. 2
2 Iron Pots, 2 kettles, 2 skillets 7/	74 # Pewter	£3.14	4. 1	
2 Iron bakes 9/	a Chafing dish, Toaster & 2 Skimmers 4/			.13
14 brass Candlesticks & Chafing ditto 8/	a Sack &c 12/		1. 0	
Tin Ware 6/	2 p. of Irons 6/	a Coffee Mill 2/	3 old Tables 4/	.18
2 Iron Ladles & dripping Pan 6/	2 Looking Glasses 3/			. 9
a walnut Case of Draws 48/	a maple Desk 20/	a Bed 40 # 53/4	a Bed 66 # 50/	8.11.4
a Bed qt. 60 #	£3. a ditto qt. 50 # 50/	a ditto qt. 64 # 40/		7.10
2 old ditto 30/	6 Bedsteads 40/	4 Quilts 60/	7 Blankets 40/	8.10
1 Set of Curtains &c	£1.10/	15 pair Sheets of all sorts	£6	7.10
16 pr. Pillow Cases 32/	5 Table cloths 15/	18 Towels 18/.		3. 5
a Walnut Chamber Table 20/	an old easy Chair 28/			2. 8
a Chest 2/	20 small Lines 20/			1. 2
a Case of Bottles 8/	1 dozen small Pictures 3/	a great Chair 3/		.14
2 old Chest 2/	old Iron &c 20/	a groce of Bottles 28/		2.10
a old Saddle &c 15/	3 old Hatts 36/	11 shirts 88/		6.19
14 pair of Stockings 24/	9 pr of Breeches 12/			1.16
a Cloke 20/	Surtout 12/	3 Coats 80/	5 Jackets 15/	6. 7
a wood Saw 6/	2 Leather Buckets 10/			.16
wood ax, Shovel, Shave, a Hoe a Wedge 6/	3 # old Iron 60/			3.6
2 Cows	£6. Scale Beam & Scales 25/	2 # Iron Wts. 36/		2.1.14 led

ditto @ 24/ a scale Beam 20/	Number of old Cask	
in Wareho. 6/		13. 4
A Negro Man £60	do Woman and Child £35	95. 0.- <sup>13</sup>

While William Bentley was the most famous boarder in the Crown-inshield-Bentley House, he was certainly not the only one. As is well known, the printer William Carlton (or Carleton) boarded in the house with his wife, Elizabeth, and their three children from as early as 1794 until Carlton's death. In 1803 Timothy Pickering brought a libel suit against Carlton and won his case. Carlton was imprisoned, and shortly succumbed, passing away on July 24, 1805.<sup>14</sup> His rather extensive inventory was taken on September 7, 1805, and listed the following household goods:

No. 1	one mahogany sideboard \$10-	2 do. card tables	
\$7	one do. light stand 50c		\$17.50
6	windsor chairs \$3.	one rocking do. 50c	two looking
	Glasses \$10.00		13.50
two pr.	brass andirons \$10	2 pr tongs and shovels \$3	
	one pr dog irons 50c		13.50
one basket	of china ware \$2.00	1 pr bellows 25c	2 doz
	knives & forks & tray \$2.		4.25
2 urns \$5	one sett of Casters \$2	2 fruit trays 50c	5
	china bowls 50c		8.00
6 china soup plates 50c	8 do do 50c	2 baskets of	
	crockery ware \$1.50		2.50
one sugar chest 25c	one carpet \$2.00	several small	
	bamboo Mats 1.00		3.25
2 tea trays \$1.50	books \$5.00	1 ink stand 20c	one
	clothes brush 25c		6.95
china in south closet 50c	glass ware \$2	9 pair cotton	
	sheets \$8.00		10.50
5 linnen sheets \$3.	9 diaper napkins \$2.00	one doz.	
	cotton napkins \$1		6.00

13. Jacob died on November 15, 1774, and this inventory was taken on March 2, 1775. It is preserved in the Essex County Probate Records, Docket 6677, and Volume 354, leaf 176-77.

14. Carlton's dispute with Pickering is best described by Harriet Silvester Tapley, *Salem Imprints, 1768-1825* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1927), pp. 112-128.



The Crowninshield-Bentley House at 108 Essex Street, Salem. William Bentley occupied the upper right (east) chamber from 1791 until his death in 1819. *Photograph by Frank Cousins, 1891.*





The Crowninshield-Bentley House, restored in its new location at 126 Essex Street on the grounds of the Essex Institute, 1964. *Photographs, unless otherwise noted, by Richard Merrill.*



Hall, or old parlor, 1961



New kitchen, furnished with several Windsor chairs, 1963



Western chamber, view showing high chest of drawers and dressing table, both in the Queen Anne style, 1963



Dr. Bentley's room, the east chamber, 1963



2 doz. linnen pillow cases \$3.69	cotton do. do. \$5.	
7 diaper table cloths \$3.00		11.00
one quilt \$1.00	blanket 50c	1.50
<i>No. 2</i>	one white counterpane 25c	one window curtain
25c	1 chest of draws \$3	3.50
one bedstead \$1.50	2 carpets \$2	2 pictures 20c
50c	basket & contents 25c	4.45
Wearing apparel \$5.00		5.00
<i>No. 3</i>	one bureau \$4	1 Easy chair & 3 coverings \$5
3 chairs \$1		10.00
one field bed and 2 setts of curtains with bolster &		
pillows wth bedstead		10.00
4 pictures 50c	one foot stove crockery 50c	6 pewter
plates \$1	2 quilts \$2	2 small do 50c
		4.50
<i>No. 4</i>	one water stand 75c	one corded bedstead \$1
one mahogany do \$3	2 chairs \$1.00	5.75
<i>No. 5</i>	3 Beds viz No. 1 wt \$5	No. 2 wt \$5
wt. \$5	2 coverlets \$1.00	8 blankets \$2
	one rug 25c	3.25
<i>No. 6</i>	3 beds viz. No. 1 wt \$5	No. 2 wt \$5
\$5.00	No. 3 wt	
15 pr. cotton sheets \$3	7 pr linnen do \$2.	5 quilts \$2.
one carpet 25c		7.25
four blankets \$1.50		1.50
<i>Kitchen</i>	one mahogany four feet table \$1	dining table
\$1	1 walnut do. \$1.	3.00
one round table 50c	6 Windsor chairs \$1.50	6 maple
do. 50c	1 pr bellows 10c	2.60
one pair andirons \$1.	shovel and tongs 50c	axe 20c
tea tray 10c	iron ware \$1.50	3.30
pounds of pewter 50c	1 brass kettle 75c	3 flat irons
10c	tin ware 1.25	2.60
one looking Glass \$1.	crockery ware 50c	one tea chest
& cannister 50c		2.00
4 brass candlesticks 25c	frying pan 25c	gridiron 10c
		.60

two fire buckets and bag \$1.00	clothes horse 25c	
folding board	10c	1.35
cellar one [barrel] with [?] pounds of pork	\$5	5.00 <sup>15</sup>

Bentley and Carlton were not the only boarders, for Bentley noted in his diary on January 10, 1795:

We have a melancholy report of the death of Capt. Benjamin Orne in the West Indies. As a resident of the same house, and an intimate acquaintance, I should be sorry to have this news confirmed.<sup>16</sup>

Unfortunately, on January 15, official confirmation of the death of Orne from fever, at the age of twenty-eight, was received in Salem.<sup>17</sup>

Lydia King, a granddaughter of Anstis Crowninshield, lived with her grandmother for some time in the western half of the house.<sup>18</sup> Bentley noted on November 1, 1792, that a Mr. Melece intended to board in the eastern half of the house.<sup>19</sup> Melece was still there on September 30, 1795,<sup>20</sup> and on January 18, 1796, Bentley noted that Melece,

who has lived in this Town above three years, & the greater part of the time with us, sailed in the Sch. Betsey, [Capt.] Townsend, for Martinico.<sup>21</sup>

There is also a record that a Providence merchant named William Creed boarded at the Crowninshield-Bentley House for a few years in the 1780s.<sup>22</sup> With all these tenants and their furnishings, the Crowninshield-Bentley House must have been rather crowded at times.

15. Carlton's inventory is in the Essex County Probate Records, Docket 4703, Volume 373, leaf 190-91. The numbers in this inventory may well indicate the contents of different rooms or closets.

16. *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D., Pastor of the East Church, Salem, Massachusetts* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1905-1914), 2:123.

17. *Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Salem: Essex Institute, 1916-1925), 6:103.

18. Anstis Crowninshield's will, dated July 20, 1772, stipulates that "no Audt. of Charge shall hereafter be brought against my Grand Daughter Lydia King, for Board or Cloathing for the time she has lived with me" (Essex County Probate Records, Docket 6666, Volume 349, leaf 287-88).

19. *Diary of William Bentley*, 1:404.

20. *Diary of William Bentley*, 2:160.

21. *Diary of William Bentley*, 2:170.

22. William Leavitt, "History of the Essex Lodge of Free Masons," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 3 (June 1861):128.

It has generally been assumed that the Crowninshield-Bentley House passed out of the hands of the Crowninshield family in 1832, with the death of the last Hannah Crowninshield.<sup>23</sup> However, it appears now that the house was owned by a member of the Rogers family, distant relatives of the Crowninshields, as late as 1870, when one Seabury F. Rogers was in possession of the entire house.<sup>24</sup>

Rogers sold each half of the house separately, and it did not have a single owner again until 1910. The west side of the house was sold to Miss Elizabeth B. Day in 1870, from whom it passed to Mary C. Mooney by 1898.<sup>25</sup> Mooney sold her half in that year to Mary Flynn of Salem, and Mrs. Flynn remained possessed of it for the next fifty years.<sup>26</sup>

The ownership of the east side presents a somewhat more complicated history. Seabury Rogers deeded this half to John Lovejoy, carpenter, in 1870,<sup>27</sup> and Lovejoy in turn resold it to David Wetherbee within a few weeks, for a price of \$2,050.<sup>28</sup> In 1872, Wetherbee attempted to sell this half to Frederick B. Browning of Salem, for \$3,400.<sup>29</sup> Browning failed to make good on his payments, and this side of the house was put up for public auction in 1878. George F. Flint purchased it for only \$2,700, and quickly sold it to James Dalrymple.<sup>30</sup> On March 6, 1891, Simon D. Dalrymple of Shanghai, China, presumably a relative of James, deeded this half for one dollar to his sisters Ann F. Andrews and Kate D. Perkins of Salem.<sup>31</sup> A similar transaction in 1908 gave ownership to Mary A. Moran.<sup>32</sup> The executor of Moran's estate sold this half to Mary

23. Cummings, "The House and Its People," p. 93.

24. Exactly how Seabury F. Rogers came to be the owner of the Crowninshield-Bentley House in 1870 is a mystery to me. Despite many frustrating attempts to trace the full title of the house, a gap exists in my knowledge of the ownership of the house between (a) the departure of Benjamin Crowninshield for Danvers in about 1811 and the death of Hannah Crowninshield in 1832 (see the list of early owners of the house in Cummings, "The House and its People," p. 97) and (b) Rogers' deeds to Day and Lovejoy in 1870. Many false leads have been followed and many red herrings pursued, all to no avail.

25. Rogers' deed to Day, Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 797, leaf 145.

26. Mooney's deed to Flynn, Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 1546, leaf 82.

27. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 797, leaf 145.

28. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 797, leaf 193.

29. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 845, leaf 213.

30. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 999, leaf 213-14 and Book 1001, leaf 213.

31. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 1306, leaf 125.

32. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 1946, leaf 142.



Flynn in 1910 for \$2,600, thus uniting the house under a single owner once again.<sup>33</sup>

Mary Flynn owned the entire house until her death as a widow in 1948, after which the house was purchased by Manuel Solovicos for \$8,000.<sup>34</sup> The Hotel Hawthorne acquired the house and land from Solovicos, and generously donated the house to the Essex Institute.

Only a few of the owners of the Crowninshield-Bentley House after 1832 actually lived in the house. A reading of the Salem directories has produced a long and varied list of tenants and occupants between 1837 and 1960, a list too long to be included here.<sup>35</sup> From this list, it seems clear that the east side of the house was nearly always used as a boarding house, with two, three, or four names listed as occupants in any given year.<sup>36</sup> Widows and workmen would stay about three years and then either move on or die. It is interesting to note that two Salem cabinet-makers, William Webb III in the west and Nehemiah Adams in the east, lived in the house during the late 1830s and early 1840s.<sup>37</sup> At least one member, and sometimes more, of the Babbidge family, relatives of the Crowninshields, lived in the east side from 1837 through 1878.

The west side of the house was also used as a boarding house down to the 1880s, when Elizabeth Day acquired it and opened a variety store, which remained in operation from 1888 to 1894. This store was succeeded for a brief time by A. A. Miller's variety store, but in 1898 Mary Flynn purchased this side of the house and established her millinery shop which was to be a permanent fixture until 1948. Flynn's millinery shop was followed by Moulton's Bakery (later Moulton's Pastry Shop), the last occupants of the house.

33. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 2046, leaf 241.

34. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 3613, leaf 547.

35. A copy of this list is on file at the Essex Institute.

36. Mrs. F. B. Gauthier called this half of the house her "boarding house" in 1903–1904.

37. Nehemiah Adams (1769–1840) had several shops in Salem. His wife, Mehitabel, continued to live in the Crowninshield-Bentley House for several years after his death, before she moved to Maine. William Webb III (1805–1849) had four children, and died intestate. His probate records indicate that he used a front room, bedroom, keeping room, kitchen, and bedchamber in the house (Essex County Probate Records, Volume 166, leaf 15).

# The Furnishings of the House

By DEAN A. FALES, JR.\*

RECENTLY a shocked visitor to one of the Institute's old houses remarked to the person showing her the building, "You mean all the old stuff here isn't original to the house?" Original furnishings are such stuff as a restorer's dreams are made on, and these dreams are only occasionally realized, although it must be admitted that the chances of such realization succeeding are far better in Salem than in many other parts of the country.

When the furnishing of the Crowninshield-Bentley House began, it was decided that any article that could be found that was used by the early occupants of the house should be acquired if at all possible. While there are some important objects owned by the Crowninshields and by Dr. Bentley, few Crowninshield family furnishings made before 1800 are known, and there is no listing of the contents of Dr. Bentley's room. Thus, a concerted effort was made to use as many representative pieces with local histories as possible, and to arrange them with as much authentic documentation as could be found in early inventories and other written records.

The rooms in the house represent the architectural development of several generations and styles, and it was decided that the furnishings of the rooms could show the tastes of the three generations that lived in the house. While 1824, the year in which the widow Hannah Crowninshield died, was chosen as the end date of most of the furnishings, it was

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felt that as few of these as possible should be nineteenth-century examples. The Crowninshield-Bentley House, insofar as possible, is a documentary restoration that shows the lives of the Crowninshields and their households through the objects they lived with.

The "hall" of a seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century house was the room in which centered most of the family activities such as socializing, eating, reading, serving, and even sleeping. Since the inventory of John Crowninshield shows no beds downstairs, however, the hall is furnished more as what we would consider today a living-dining room. The objects in the room predate the deaths of both John and Anstis Crowninshield, and this room and the kitchen chamber are furnished with objects appropriate to the first generation that lived in the house.

The dark Spanish brown color of the woodwork, combined with the strong bolection molding around the fireplace and the large fielded panels of the fireplace wall, contrast with an airiness provided by the four large windows and the white plaster of the ceiling and walls above the dado. The height of the ceiling is eight and one-half feet, and the room is over nineteen feet long and over fifteen feet wide.

There is no carpet on the oiled pine floor. While "one handsome large carpet 9 Foot 6 Inches by 6 Foot 6 Inches" is mentioned in a sale of the contents of the house of Jonathan Barnard of Boston in 1735,<sup>38</sup> a Newburyport author, describing a parlor of a house later in the eighteenth century, wrote, "There was no carpet, floors had not then become generally covered, and, if covered in the winter, they were usually bare in the summer, carpets being considered hot and dusty."<sup>39</sup>

A span of three quarters of a century is covered by the furniture in the room. Between the east windows is a seventeenth-century oak chest with a drawer, with geometric panels, and applied spindles and bosses. This chest came down in the Herrick, Phillips, and Putnam families of Salem. Over it is a large Queen Anne looking glass which came from the Hancock House in Boston and which hangs from an early hook built into the wall.

38. *Boston News-Letter*, May 8/15, 1735. Quoted in George Francis Dow, *The Arts & Crafts in New England, 1704-1775* (Topsfield, 1927), p. 110.

39. Sarah Anna Emery, *Reminiscences of a Nonagenarian* (Newburyport, 1879), p. 32. Even in 1829, the inventory of John Andrew of Salem, completed on July 21, listed all the large Brussels carpets from the first-floor rooms, as well as the front stair carpet, in the garret.



In front of the fireplace is a locally made bannister-back armchair of the early eighteenth century. Beside it is an unusual cherry candlestand found in Gloucester and made between 1725 and 1750. Instead of the legs being dovetailed into the bottom of the shaft as was done later in the century, the cabriole legs are doweled and pinned into the shaft several inches above the base. On the candlestand is a seventeenth-century English brass candlestick with a large square base, a pair of English steel extension tongs, and an oval brass tobacco box.

In the northeast corner a cherry pipe box hangs on the wall. At the right of the fireplace is an early pair of steel pipe tongs, and a rack for drying out clay pipes rests on the hearth. Other fireplace equipment includes a pair of early eighteenth-century knifeblade andirons with brass finials, a shovel, a pair of tongs, a trivet, and a small brass kettle. The cast-iron fireback is a very important one, dated 1697, with the initials "NW" conjoined near the base. The upper scrolls are formed by dolphins, and the scene in the main section illustrates the fable of the Fox and the Crow.

On the west and south walls are four mezzotint portraits engraved by Peter Pelham of Boston. Mezzotints were very popular in Massachusetts homes in the middle of the eighteenth century and, from surviving examples, were favored especially in Salem. The engravings in the room show Rev. Benjamin Colman, done in 1735 after a portrait by John Smibert; Rev. William Cooper, 1743, after Smibert; Rev. Thomas Prince, 1750, after a portrait by John Greenwood; and Thomas Hollis, Merchant, after a portrait by Joseph Highmore, the last work done by Pelham in 1751. Pelham, born in England in 1697, came to Boston in 1727, and, with the exception of a few years in Newport, worked in Massachusetts until his death in 1751.<sup>40</sup> He was the first mezzotint engraver in the colonies and became the stepfather of John Singleton Copley. Fourteen different portraits (eleven of ministers) are known to have been done by him.

A set of four leather-backed side chairs from the Curwen family, with ball feet and lacking the suggestion of cresting at the top, surround the walnut Queen Anne dining table with drop-leaves and very delicate cabriole legs and pad feet. On the table are Dutch and English delft

40. Anne Allison, "Peter Pelham—Engraver in Mezzotints," *The Magazine Antiques* 52 (December 1947):441–443. See also *Boston Prints and Printmakers 1670–1775*, (Boston: The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1973).

plates, a large English delft bowl, and early eighteenth-century wine glasses. In the china closet to the right of the fireplace are other tablewares, including delft and several Continental tin-enamel glazed tankards with pewter lids.

Along the south and west walls is another important set of four side chairs. These have caned backs and seats, carved cresting rails and front stretchers, and were made in England toward the end of the seventeenth century. The bold Flemish scrolled feet rest on balls. These chairs were owned in the Clark family of Boston and the North Shore.

Near the hallway door is an early ball-foot desk, probably English, about 1700. This desk, with its handsome burlled veneers, handsome interior with a well, and original brasses, is also a Curwen family piece. On the desk is the Crowninshield family Bible. Printed in Oxford, England, by John Baskett in 1726, it was owned originally by Anstis Crowninshield, the wife of the original owner of the house. Inscribed on the blank pages between the Old Testament and New Testament is, "George Crowninshield, His Bible by Heirship from the estate of his Mother, 1774"; and in these pages are various genealogical notes of the family. Between the windows on the Essex Street side of the room is an English tall clock with a Salem history made by Edward Faulkner, who worked in London from 1710 to 1735.

A narrow passage leads from the hall to the kitchen. The neutral contrasts of the black dado, lead-colored woodwork, and white walls of the kitchen are pleasantly relieved by the warmer tones of the furniture, polished metalwork, colored pottery, and the numerous painted accessories that fill the room. Set up as a kitchen of the eighteenth century, the furniture consists of a local maple gateleg table of the early part of the century, surrounded by two slat-back side chairs and a charming splay-leg slat-back high chair. To the right of the fireplace is a chestnut child's chair with cut-out diamonds and hearts at the top of the back. On the east wall is a very early eighteenth-century tavern table, from the Dean-Barstow House in Taunton, with a scrubbed pine top and with modified trumpet turnings on the legs which resemble the balusters of the front stairway. The large hanging shelves over it, from Salem, are made of walnut and painted dark green. The charming pine cupboard along the opposite wall, painted a light olive green and apparently standing on its tiptoes, is an Essex county piece. To the right of the back door, above the basket containing clothespins is a small

looking glass with painted decorations on its frame and cresting. It was owned by a Topsfield family and is of a type that has been associated with Nehemiah Partridge, an early eighteenth-century japanner and painter of Boston and Portsmouth.<sup>41</sup>

The 1761 inventory of John Crowninshield lists all the objects in the kitchen, and this list has been followed as carefully as possible in the furnishing of the room.

Dominating the room is the huge fireplace, with its original iron fireback and two bake ovens. From the lug pole hang three trammels of varying types holding a covered pot, a very early griddle, and a tilting hot water kettle. The large andirons are very early ones, and while patterned after a foreign prototype, were found in Massachusetts and most likely were made here. In and around the fireplace are “scures,” “bell meattle skillets,” “kittles,” and “potts,” as listed in the inventory, as well as a Dutch oven, a three-part gophering iron for pressing ruffles, a rotating spice roaster, a grisset, wafer and waffle irons, one dated 1720 with the maker’s mark IP in a heart, and many ladles, cooking spoons, and forks. On the table and in the cupboard are tablewares of pewter, glass, wood, horn, and earthenware. On the bench is a water pail and tub. Behind the table in the corner is a very rare baby minder.

The objects in this room speak silently yet eloquently of the most basic and necessary elements of eighteenth-century living in Salem.

In 1794 when Benjamin Crowninshield added on a second ell with another kitchen and kitchen chamber above, he also remodeled the part of the house in which he lived, including the western parlor. The “modernity” of the kitchen is reflected in its furnishings which include several handsome examples of Windsor chairs and a late Chippendale-style dining table, all from Essex County. The numbers of brass cooking accoutrements reflect the greater prosperity of the family and the wider availability of such imported items in the late eighteenth century. The ceramics and glassware also indicate the changing patterns of English manufacturing and American consumption. The generous proportions of the “new” kitchen make it clear that the room was used for many domestic purposes—eating, washing, cooking, and even sleeping for those who were very small.

While the western parlor of the house existed before the death of

41. See Esther Stevens Brazer, “The Early Boston Japanners,” *The Magazine Antiques* 43 (May 1943):208–211, especially Fig. 7.



John Crowninshield in 1761, the paneling in it dates from the end of the eighteenth century, when Benjamin Crowninshield (John's grandson) and his family owned the western half of the house. The room is furnished as a parlor of the eighties or early nineties, just before the Federal style struck Salem with its glorious impact.

The putty color of the woodwork contrasts with the colorful *Chinoiserie* wallpaper, its pattern copied from eighteenth-century paper in a room from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, at the Museum of Fine Arts. The treatment of the blue damask valances is based on a painting by the New England artist Ralph Earl, done around 1796. Painted floors had come into fashion by this time, and the floor is painted Spanish brown (or Indian red, as it is known today), based on evidence found in the account book of William Gray, a late eighteenth-century Salem house-and-ornamental painter.<sup>42</sup> On the floor is a Soumak carpet from the Caucasus, with geometric, jewel-like medallions in pale blue, faded orange, and rust colors. This came from a Salem family, and judging from existing examples in Salem homes, Soumaks must have been the most popular type of carpets brought back from the Near East in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Describing a Newburyport house of about 1800, Mrs. Emery noted:

Carpets had come much more generally into use. The Turkey carpets bordered and fringed had given place to those from English looms, though Turkey rugs were still highly esteemed. Very pretty carpets in striped patterns of home construction had become fashionable, and those from rags for common use were often seen.<sup>43</sup>

On the fireplace wall are six colored English prints of the eighteenth century, sold by Robert Sayer of London. The views show several scenes of St. James Park, Hampton Court, Lambeth, and the hospital at Bethlehem. They are of a type very popular in American homes in the last half of the eighteenth century, and one bears on the back the information they were later "Bot at auction for 50¢—7th June '94."

To the right of the fireplace is a Chippendale "lolling" chair which descended in the Curwen family. In the fireplace are a pair of bell-metal andirons with claw-and-ball feet and triple urn tops, a type that is

42. Account book in Essex Institute collections.

43. Emery, *Reminiscences* . . . , p. 244.

frequently found in Massachusetts. The footman, kettle, and holder are but a part of the ubiquitous ceremony of tea drinking, which was so popular in the eighteenth century, with one famous, wasteful exception noted in the waters of Boston in 1773. The Queen Anne tea table of stained maple is close to the fireplace.<sup>44</sup> The table, a New England piece, is known as the Polly Fisher table. On the table is part of a tea set of late eighteenth-century Chinese export porcelain. Each piece is fluted and has polychrome floral decoration with floral swags at the top.

Beneath the windows are a very fine pair of Massachusetts ladder-back Chippendale side chairs with carved-and-pierced ladders, molded front legs, and commodious saddle seats. Another pair of side chairs were also made in Massachusetts between 1760 and 1790 and have carved splats and slip seats. Chairs of this type are also found with carved cabriole legs and claw-and-ball feet.

On the east wall are a pair of local portraits, probably painted in the 1770s. One is of a Salem sea captain, Benjamin King (1740–1804), who married Sarah Northey (1743–1803) in 1764. The other shows Mrs. King holding their young daughter. To the left of the door is a very fine reverse-serpentine-front Chippendale desk with claw-and-ball feet. Closely related to Boston and Charlestown desks, this one, with a scallop shell carved on the base and a fan carved on the lid, was most likely made in Salem. The interior is blocked and has four carved fans on the drawer fronts. It was owned in the Reith family of Salem, and inscribed on the side of one of the document drawers, a spot where optimists gaze hopefully in anticipation of learning the maker of a desk, is this inscription: “Apr. 12, 1862. Nellie broke her collar bone at 11 o’clock.” Perhaps she, too, longed to know the maker of this important desk.

In the small room at the head of the stairs over the entry are a group of objects relating to the Rev. William Bentley. The large portrait copied by Charles Osgood in 1828 from a life portrait painted by James Frothingham is here. Benjamin W. Crowninshield had this copy done for the Institute. The Frothingham likeness is at the Peabody Museum, and Bentley mentions in his diary sitting for it from November 1818

44. See Rodris Roth, “Tea Drinking in 18th-century America: Its Etiquette and Equipage,” *United States, National Museum Bulletin* 225, Contributions from the Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, 1961), paper 14, pp. 61–91.

into January of the following year. A silhouette of Bentley hangs on one wall.

On the west wall are two lithographs, done in the 1840s by Bufford and Company of Boston after paintings by the Salem artist Daniel M. Shepard, showing the exterior and interior of the East Church. The church was built in 1717 and torn down in 1846. Fragments from the church now in the entry chamber include the worn floorboard from the pulpit, a small folding child's seat in old red paint, a dentil from the base of the steeple, and a number of spindles from the tops of the pews. When the church was taken down, souvenirs were made out of some of the oak beams and in the room are two patch or snuff boxes made of these timbers. There is also a small mahogany salt cup made from the wood of Dr. Bentley's pulpit by the Salem cabinetmaker William Webb (1805-1849).

The lone piece of furniture in the room is a large pine desk, painted green, with a slant top and two drawers below. It was formerly in the Registry of Deeds office in Salem and was traditionally used there by Dr. Bentley. In it are additional items belonging to him.

Perhaps Bentley's most cherished possession was his own copy of the psalm and hymn book he encouraged to be published in 1788. This book is here, and its marker has never been moved from the last hymn Dr. Bentley read the Sunday before he died. The book was given by James Flint, Bentley's successor, to Sarah Brown Nichols, who gave it to Samuel C. Beane, the donor's father.

Another book bearing Bentley's bookplate was presented to him by the Corporation of Cambridge University from the Society for Propagating the Gospel in New England & the Parts Adjacent. It is John Leland's *A View of the Principal Deistical Writers* . . . , the third edition, printed in London in 1757.

Two of Dr. Bentley's possessions given the Institute by Henry Bentley Fowle include a pair of silver cufflinks engraved "WB" and the silver watch which is said to have been purchased in Paris by Benjamin Franklin for presentation to Dr. Bentley in 1785. It was made by J. Charleson of London and the date letter of 1744 is on the case. It was given by William Bentley Fowle, Bentley's nephew, to William Bentley Fowle, Jr., and then to Henry Bentley Fowle. Bentley's original watch paper, inscribed "WB," is still inside the back of the case.

The miniature portrait of Dr. Bentley done by Hannah Crownin-



shield is in the desk, as is a lithograph of Bentley issued by the Pendletons in Boston in 1828 based on a drawing by T. West. Several manuscripts round out the contents of the desk.

The largest chamber in the old part of the house was the room in which the Rev. William Bentley lived when he boarded with the Crowninshields from 1791 until his death in 1819. The room is similar to the hall below, and is furnished with objects appropriate to, and some actually owned by, Dr. Bentley.

"Such is the present state of the arts in America," Bentley wrote in 1795, lamenting the slow development of American arts.<sup>45</sup> No one was more interested than Bentley in their development, since his eye and imagination were both constantly intrigued and inspired by the architecture, sculpture, furnishings, and paintings he saw. In addition to merely looking, however, Bentley was an early collector with an unbelievably wide variety of interests. He gathered portraits, prints, books, manuscripts, furnishings, and coins, as well as all sorts of materials related to natural history, ethnology, and archaeology—some on a local, and others on a worldwide basis. This vast collection he kept in his "cabinet" at the East Church and in his room. His diary contains many references about his trading, buying, and giving countless objects.<sup>46</sup> His taste was indeed catholic, and he recorded his newly acquired pieces with accuracy. In 1819, for example, one day's accessions consisted of the following:

From the South Sea I had this day a tooth of the Spermaceti Whale, & the eyes of the Squid. From Siam, the mandible of the Pelican & from Africa, the horn of the Unicorn Rhinoceros.<sup>47</sup>

In 1809, he described an unusual weather glass.<sup>48</sup> To the left of the window is an early barometer and thermometer made by F. Sattery and Company in London. Under it is an Indian basket, behind a local Chippendale corner chair which is fitted out to conceal a necessary utensil under the deep, shaped sides. The curly maple desk-and-bookcase is

45. William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D.* (Salem, 1905–1914), 2:163. See Huldah M. Smith, "Some Aspects of William Bentley as Art Collector and Connoisseur," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 97(April 1961):151–164.

46. A twenty-five-page listing of the contents of his cabinets is among Bentley's papers at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester.

47. Bentley, 4:598.

48. Bentley, 3:421.

another Essex County piece made shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century. In the upper section are late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century books, many of them local religious imprints. On the desk is a copy of the magnificent edition of the Bible brought out by Bentley's friend Isaiah Thomas in 1791. It is a folio edition with fifty-five plates engraved by Samuel Hill of Boston and Joseph H. Seymour of Worcester. An inkwell, a sander, a brass candlestick, ink, and miscellaneous papers are also on the desk, and in one of the pigeonholes is a small fragment of Plymouth Rock similar to that given Bentley on December 19, 1796, by Captain Patterson.

In the closet at the right of the fireplace, among clothing, bottles, and a basket, is an Indian skull, possibly a unique possession in any American historic house!<sup>49</sup> In 1809, Bentley was given a skull and an under jaw that were dug from an Indian grave in the South Fields. He wrote, "Upon bringing it home, I found that it was sufficiently firm to contain without leaking boiling water, till it was full."<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the books, papers, scientific items, and curios in Bentley's possession, he also owned a number of portraits. The mezzotint portrait, done by Peter Pelham in 1750, is of the Rev. Charles Brockwell, and added in ink on the description of the engraving is, "and rector of St. Peter's Church from 1738 to 1746 in Salem." In his diary, Dr. Bentley noted, "Brockwell of St. Peter's I have in a Mezzo taken at Boston."<sup>51</sup>

When President James Monroe visited Salem in July 1817, Dr. Bentley noted in his diary:

In decorating the hall for the reception of the President on the morrow it was my purpose to encourage a display of portraits such as could be found of the fathers of Mass. particularly of the County of Essex. I could supply in paintings, Endicott, & Leverett, & Capt. Curwen, our first Merchant & Captain of Horse, & F. Higginson, our First Minister. I could give in Chalks, Winthrop, & Bradstreet, the first & last old Charter Governour, besides W. Raleigh, the first discoverer on the Atlantic & Drake on the western Ocean. I had Curwen, g. son of Capt. C., the

49. Lent by the Peabody Museum of Salem.

50. Bentley, 3:483.

51. Bentley, 4:562.

minister of Salem, the Mathers & several Boston ministers of the past century, with many characters of the revolution, Army & navy, & Civil list. But it was overruled in favor of history paintings such as of naval actions &c.<sup>52</sup>

When he saw the President on July 11, he presented Monroe with “the Gold headed walking Cane of the late Gen. Knox, Sec. of War, & the very elegant Tobacco box of Silver, with a wrought China top, received from China.”<sup>53</sup>

Not all of Bentley’s portraits of seventeenth-century “fathers of Mass.” were originals. He mentions that his portraits of Winthrop and Endicott were copies,<sup>54</sup> and on the west wall is an old copy of the portrait of Governor John Endicott (1589–1665) in the Council Chamber in Boston. Under it is an octagonal brass sundial made for Governor Endicott in 1630 by the London clockmaker William Bowyer, who worked from 1623 to 1642.<sup>55</sup> On September 21, 1796, Bentley described it:

At the door we found the Gov.’s dial which was in copper, a very fair impression, & in the highest order. It was marked “William Bowyer, London, Clockmaker, fecit. I. 1630 E.” (The initials of the Gov.’s name). On the gnomon on one side Lat. 42 & on the other Salem.<sup>56</sup>

On September 25, 1812, Bentley borrowed the sundial, describing it again in his diary. Finally, on April 17, 1810, he recorded the purchase of it:

This day Capt. John Endicott for the sum of Three Dollars sold me the Dial belonging to the first Gov. Endicott & the first ever used in our Colony & the oldest now to be found in all America. I hope the family will rise again.<sup>57</sup>

The sundial rests on an unusual set of four graduated bookcases, made of pine and painted red. They are eighteenth-century cases and stand

52. Bentley, 4:463.

53. Bentley, 4:465.

54. Bentley, 3:52.

55. *Britten’s Old Clocks and Watches and Their Makers* (New York, 1956), p. 340.

56. Bentley, 2:198.

57. Bentley, 3:511.

on each other, with a door on the front of each section swinging up on hinges.

Hung on the summer beam near the east windows is a birdcage. Before coming to board with the Crowninshields, Dr. Bentley was given a canary by Mrs. Hodges on July 6, 1787. In September, a long entry in his diary describes exactly the sort of birdcage he desired.<sup>58</sup> On October 12, he mentioned that he received his birdcage. "The plan was well executed in the wood, but not in the wire. I borrowed of Lydia Mason, her Goldfinch to sing with my Canary."<sup>59</sup>

On an early dressing table between the windows is a pair of snuffers, bottles, a tin shaving mug, a shaving brush, and razors, one of which is a small Chinese example, similar to one Bentley received earlier in 1788.<sup>60</sup> Several books are also on the table and two of these bear the plain bookplate of William Bentley. One is a copy of Milton's *Paradise Regained*, and the other is a French book with engravings of battle lines and formations.

Over the table hangs a French engraving of Thomas Jefferson done in 1801. On the back is an old label stating that it was presented by President Jefferson to Bentley in recognition of his services in translating an important Arabian document received by the State Department. The label states:

Benjamin Crowninshield, who was an intimate friend of the President, said that Dr. Bentley was the only person that he knew of who could translate it, as he was a great linguist and could read and write any tongue spoken on the face of the earth.

This engraving is probably the "elegant engraving of Jefferson" Bentley mentioned as one of the decorations of the meetinghouse for the Fourth of July celebration in 1804.<sup>61</sup>

In the corner near the window is a fine example of a seventeenth-century slat-back arm chair, with extremely well turned finials. It was owned by Philip English and his wife, Mary, who were accused of being witches in 1692, subsequently escaping to Boston and then New

58. Bentley, 1:74.

59. Bentley, 1:78.

60. Bentley, 1:90.

61. Bentley, 3:96.



York. Dr. Bentley eloquently described their trials and their house (May 21, 1793), and in June wrote:

Ordered the Chair received from the family of English in memory of 1692 to be painted green, & on the back 1692, upper slat; middle slat, *M. English* lower slat *Ap. 22*, the time of her mittimus; on the front upper slat, *It shall be told of her*.<sup>62</sup>

This chair is the English chair, and as well as being painted green, it bears the inscriptions Dr. Bentley mentioned. It was later in the possession of Benjamin Crowninshield and surely ranks as one of the most important early chairs made in this area.

On the chest in the corner is a flamestitch needlework pocketbook, a blown-and-cut-glass decanter, and four small engraved wine glasses that were given to the Institute in 1848. The creamware mug was owned by Dr. Bentley and was made in Liverpool and transfer-printed by Sadler and Green in the 1790's. On it the signals of shipping firms from Liverpool are shown at Liverpool Light on Bidston Hill.<sup>63</sup>

To the left of the chest, a simple mahogany Salem Chippendale chair stands by a local mahogany tea table with carved claw feet that descended in the Patch family of Salem. On it is an early purple and copper lustre English tea set with bird and foliage designs of the second decade of the nineteenth century. Bentley's tea caddy is a black Chinese lacquered example, with European neoclassical motifs in gold. On the top are the initials "WB."

These objects, then, comprise the furnishings of Dr. Bentley's room. Two important objects formerly in the room are the busts of Governor John Winthrop and Voltaire which were carved by Samuel McIntire for Bentley in 1798 and around 1802 respectively, and which are now at the American Antiquarian Society.<sup>64</sup> Other objects mentioned in the diary and now lacking in the room include a terrestrial globe seventeen inches in diameter, a red-and-white checked handkerchief, a Shaker candlestick, an early couch, and a settle.<sup>65</sup>

62. Bentley, 2:28.

63. A similar example, made earlier in 1789, is illustrated in *The Magazine Antiques* 8(December 1925):356.

64. See Bentley, 2:268-269; and Nina Fletcher Little, "Carved Figures by Samuel McIntire and His Contemporaries," *Samuel McIntire: A Bicentennial Symposium* (Salem, Mass., 1957), pp. 82-84. These came to the Society as part of Bentley's "cabinet."

65. Bentley, 1:38; 2:137, 2:152; 3:46, 4:595.

Not every object mentioned in his diary came to his room, but it is safe to assume that it must have been one of the most varied and unusual rooms in the early Republic. Today it conveys the diversity of interests and breadth of one of the most interesting of Salem's residents. Funds for the restoration of the room were generously given by The First Church, successor to the East Church, in Salem.

When Dr. Bentley visited the Derby Farm in 1801, and viewed the important furnishings there, his eyes were those of a connoisseur and he wrote, "The furniture was rich but never violated the chastity of correct taste."<sup>66</sup> His own collections were also rich, and his taste a superb mirror of the best of his era. Many of his best possessions he gave away during his lifetime. His will, dated May 8, 1819, left his German books, New England printed books, manuscripts "not in my own hand," and all his paintings and engravings, as well as his "cabinets with all it contains," to the American Antiquarian Society.<sup>67</sup> All his classical and theological books, dictionaries, lexicons, and Bibles he left to Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania. He left all his silver to Hannah Crowninshield, the daughter of the Widow Hannah, and to Hannah Crowninshield Armstrong; and he asked his nephew, William Bentley Fowle, his executor, to destroy all writings "in my own hand" and to keep whatever remained of the estate for his services. Today no one blames the nephew for failing to destroy the writings of his uncle.

The western chamber of the Crowninshield-Bentley House was remodeled while Benjamin Crowninshield, his wife Mary, and their children lived in the western half of the house from 1791 until around 1811, and it is furnished as a chamber representing the third generation that lived in the house. It combines the old and the new both in its architecture and in its contents. The early woodwork and the later mantelpiece are painted a strong deep green. The green-and-white wallpaper is a reproduction of a late eighteenth-century wallpaper used in the Enoch Frye House in Andover. The white window hangings with green fringe are based on curtains shown in 1795 Connecticut portraits of Mr. and Mrs. James Eldridge painted by John Brewster, Jr.<sup>68</sup> The

66. Bentley, 2:400.

67. Essex County Probate Court, Will No. 2371, January 4, 1820.

68. Brewster also did many portraits in Massachusetts and especially in Maine. He was in Newburyport in 1801, 1802, and 1809, and was in Salem in 1809. See Nina Fletcher Little, "John Brewster, Jr., 1766-1854: Deaf-Mute Portrait Painter of Connecticut and Maine," *Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin* 25 (October 1960):97-129.

floor is painted Spanish brown and on it is an early nineteenth-century Persian Feraghan carpet.

The earliest pieces of furniture in the room are the Queen Anne high chest of drawers and dressing table, both locally made. The drawers of the high chest are veneered with burlled walnut, the drawer edges having herringbone inlay, while the dressing table is of solid walnut. The top of the dressing table has a star inlay in its center, characteristic of early eighteenth-century Boston cabinetmaking. A delicate string inlay outlines all the drawers and the skirt of the table. On it is a dressing glass, a copper brazier, curling irons, a "powder puff" or wig bellows, and a small bellows-shaped painted needlecase. The whimsical transitional side chair in front of the dressing table was made in the third quarter of the eighteenth century and was found in Marblehead. The bed is a late eighteenth-century example with square, tapering legs and spade feet.

By the fireplace is an unusual small square tilt-top candlestand. The brass andirons have lemon tops and were made probably in Boston or Charlestown late in the eighteenth century. The shovel in the fireplace came from the Tristram Dalton House in Newburyport; and on the hearth are a footwarmer, an iron, and other accessories.

This chamber is a late eighteenth-century room with many earlier pieces in it. It resembles the chamber of the author's parents in *Reminiscences of a Nonagenarian*:

Young people, their fortunes still to be made, my parents' rooms were plainly furnished, with common tables and flag-bottomed chairs. A high case of drawers was the chief ornament to the best bedroom, the others boasting of only a chest of drawers. These were about the height of a bureau, with a chest atop and one or two drawers beneath. The square, high-post bedsteads were tastily hung with muslin and chintz curtains, and covered with the prettiest of coverlids, woven in love-knots and other dainty patterns, or with quilts stiff with the most elaborate quilting.<sup>69</sup>

The furnishings in the two kitchen chambers suggest also the different generations that lived in the two halves of the house. In the spacious western room is a tall post bed dressed with chintz bed hangings, a

69. Emery, *Reminiscences* . . . , p. 6.

handsome bureau of about 1810, probably made in the Salem area, a cherry slant-top desk, as well as reminders of the artistic talents of Dr. Bentley's protege, Hannah Crowninshield. Her large paint box is on a table in the small rear chamber, and several examples of her art work hang on the wall. The furnishings of the small room over the "old" kitchen like those of the hall downstairs are appropriate to the first generation living in the house. The woodwork in the chamber is a putty color, and the floorboards are the widest in the house. In the closet, to the right of the fireplace, the shelves have grooves for holding plates. This is no surprise since some eating, drinking, and preparing of food were done in early chambers. The charred remnants of an old lug pole were discovered in the flue, and the inventory of 1761 listed two pair of andirons in this room; thus, the fireplace contains a water kettle, a few pots and pans, and several other cooking implements. The inventory also listed a "map of Cannada river" in the little kitchen chamber. This must have been the chart advertised by the Boston engraver Thomas Johnston, in the *Boston News-Letter* in 1746, and in the *Boston Gazette* in 1759.<sup>70</sup> In place of this important chart, over the fireplace is a 1755 colored French map showing all the St. Lawrence river and extending down the coast to Cape Cod. Other early furnishings include a low-post bed and matching trundle bed, both painted red, two transitional chairs, painted black and made in Essex County in the 1720s, and a small child's slat-back armchair, the seat covered with deer hide, the date 1750 incised in one of the slats.

While the 1761 inventory lists two beds in the garret, it does not indicate the age of the occupants of the chamber. Due to the scale of the room, however, it was decided to furnish it as a child's chamber of the eighteenth century, with a few later accessories. The walls are painted a charcoal, or lead, color, and the diminutive scale of the chimney breast is one of the most delightful features of the house.

The largest pieces of furniture in the room are the beds. Both were made in Essex County. The larger one is a low-post bed, slightly smaller than usual, painted red and having square, tapered legs of excellent proportions. The trundle bed, or "underbed," has its wheels placed so it may be pulled out to the side of the larger one.

There are three small armchairs in the chamber. One is an eighteenth-

70. Dow, *The Arts and Crafts in New England*, pp. 28, 31.



century slat-back type painted gray, its posts well worn from having been dragged on the floor by children. The small looking glass was owned later in the Pulsifer family, and an old label on it states that the frame was bought by John Goldthwait of Salem Village and given to his mother on his twenty-first birthday in 1792.

In the cupboard to the left of the fireplace are many pieces of miniature pewter and britannia, including a child's tea set attributed to Roswell Gleason of Dorchester identical to one made for his daughter Mary in the 1830's.<sup>71</sup> There are also small knives and forks here, as well as a wooden top and a small brass combination sundial-compass.

The small iron fire tongs and the hooked rug on the floor were made locally. A large hickory child's hoop and several spelling and arithmetic books represent the radically divergent activities of the earlier occupants of the small chamber.

While originally a housewife's headache, an early attic can be the answer to a restorer's dream, since it provides an area for the display of miscellaneous and unrelated objects of all sorts. The 1761 inventory shows that the extra bedding and all the firearms in the house were kept here, as well as everything from old windows to a speaking trumpet.

The diversity of objects, both in the attic and in the entire house, shows the varied phases of early living in the Salem area. Through carefully selected, representative objects that are documents in themselves, the Crowninshield-Bentley House recounts local history in a most concrete and colorful manner. As a modern visitor proceeds from room to room of the house, the lives of its eighteenth-century occupants become more tangible in the historical imagination. The written records of the Crowninshields and the voluminous diary notes of Dr. Bentley are supplemented by artifact and architectural environment, greatly enlarging the twentieth-century observer's understanding of the past.

71. See John Whiting Webber, "Roswell Gleason," *The Magazine Antiques* 20 (August 1931):89, Fig. 6.

## APPENDIX

### AN INVENTORY OF THE ESTATE OF CAPT. JOHN CROWNINSHIELD LATE OF SALEM AND APPRIZED BY US THE SUBSCRIBERS AT SALEM NOVEMBER 10TH 1761

#### IN THE WESTERN LOWER ROOM

A large looking glass and Desk  
A large Table, a smaller Ditto  
A Clock, a Maple Table  
A Walnut Table in the Entry  
1- $\frac{1}{2}$  doz'n Maple Leather Chairs  
A Great Walnut Chair  
12 China Plates, a Ditto Bowl, Ditto  
4 Decanters, A Small Ditto, 9 Wine Glasses  
4 Beakres, 1 Doz'n Delph Plates, a Tea Pot  
3 China Bowls, 6 Sugar Boxes, (?) Ditto  
1 doz'n Candle Molds, some small glasses  
8 framed picktures carved, 4 small Ditto  
12 Ditto Black frames  
A silver Tankard wt 25 oz. 7 dwt 12 gr.  
2 Porringers wt 15 oz. 1 dwt  
6 Spoons wt 13 oz. 5 dwt, 2 pr. silver buckles wt. 2 oz. 3 dwt.  
A pr. gold buttons and a ring  
A Silver Watch, Chain  
A pr. Bellows, a pr. andirons  
A pr. money scales and weights, a large Bible  
A small Ditto, sundry books  
A large Cannister, a . . . . . compass

#### IN THE KITCHEN

A pr. Doggirons, 2 leather buckets  
A lanthorn, 9 Picktures, Brushes  
2 pr. Stilliards, leaden weights, brass Ditto  
A Pine Table, A small Ditto, a cradle  
A Jack with the weights, tongs and shovel  
A pr. andirons, 2 Tramells, a Fender, Toaster fork, Ladle, scures, and  
a lamp  
2 Gridirons, a Frying pan, a Spit  
A dripping pan, 8 potts, an iron skillet  
An iron pott, 2 kittles, 2 brass Ditto

A small Ditto, 2 bell meattle skillets  
 2 brass skillets, a tin kitchen  
 4 pds old pewter @ 10/pd, 86 pds Ditto @ 1/  
 6 Tin pans, a Warming Pan, A Table  
 A brass Standing Candlestick, 6 Candlesticks and Snuffers, a Tin  
 Watering Pott and Pail  
 Some Tin Measures and Pans, a Candle Box and Coffee Mill, a Lignum  
 Vitce Morter  
 A parcel of knives and forks, Earthen ware  
 A Flour and two pepper Boxes and a Bellmettle mortar

#### IN THE WESTERN CHAMBER

A Looking Glass, a Case with Drawers  
 A Chamber Table, 6 Chairs, a great Ditto  
 A pr. Andirons, 7 Pictures, two Basketts with four Large Bottles,  
 two Baskets and a Trunk  
 A Callico Quilt, one Ditto, a pr. Blankets  
 A Feather Bolster and two Pillows  
 A Bedstead and bottom, a Suit of Curtains head Cloth Rods, a Razor  
 Case with 2 Razors  
 His Waring Apparel

#### IN THE KITCHEN CHAMBER

A Walnut Table, a Glass  
 2 Basketts, 2 pr. Andirons, a Suit of Curtains Valliances, 2 Cotton  
 Counterpins  
 A blue bed quilt, a rugg  
 A bed & bolster wt. 54 Pds., a Straw Bed, bedsted & cord

#### IN THE LITTLE KITCHEN CHAMBER

A rugg, a Bed & Pillow  
 2 Cases with bottle, A Dumb john  
 Knives & forks wooden bowls a map of Cannada River

#### IN THE EASTERN CHAMBER

A small rugg a green quilt  
 A bed bolster & 3 Pillows  
 A bedsted & under bed A cotten coverlet  
 An old rugg A Bed & Bolster  
 A Bedsted & under bed A chest with Draws  
 A quarter Wagoner A book for shipswright  
 A Basket an old Bedsted A Pallet Ditto

#### IN THE GARRET

A small Table A rugg A small Ditto  
 A Bed & bolster Curtains head cloth & Teaster

Underbed bedstead & cord  
 A pr Andirons A looking glass A Trunk  
 A Prospect Glass, A Gun, 2 Ditto.  
 2 Cutlases & Cartouch Boxes A pr. Pistols  
 A pr. Ditto 6 Codlines A Tray  
 A Bed, 2 old Ruggs  
 12 Ozenbrig sheets 25 Cotten ditto  
 14 Cotten & linen Ditto A comfitter  
 An Iron Kittle A speaking trumpet  
 An old sail 3 Holland sheets  
 A Damask Table Cloth A Diaper Ditto  
 4 Ditto 4 Linen 24 Diaper Towels  
 24 Diaper Napkins 16 Pillow cases  
 24 Cotton Ditto A Close Stool Pan  
 A Bedpan A Glass in the kitchen chamber  
 A Bedsted Old Iron  
 4 old windows 30 Bushels Corn  
 Old copper & Brass

#### IN THE BARN

A Grindstone A pr. runners A parcel of Casks  
 2 Blunderbusses Old Iron  
 A pr. cart wheels Some coopers tools  
 2 saddles 3 half Bushels A Pitch Pot  
 A Chaise & Jack . . . . . A pr. Fetters 2 hoes & a shovel  
 A saw . . . . . & Wedges A spade & 3 axes  
 A wheelbarrow, a wooden horse 45 gal'n Molasses  
 18 Bushels of Wheat A cow 2 hoggs

#### IN THE WASH HOUSE

A large cable 3 iron crows & 2 graplings  
 A parcel old sails & guns old iron  
 Blocks, dead eyes Cabbin windows & dead lights  
 Pitch mapps A scale beam one Ditto & weights  
 A joynter A saltsifter 2 Pitch pots & half bushel  
  
 A sett of tray hoops  
 A Negro Man A Negro Woman  
 A Dwelling house Barn & out houses  
 Half a fish house & floties for drying fish  
 A schooner & appurtenances  
 A Pew in the lower meeting house  
 A common right in the Great Pasture  
 A piece of land by Englishes wharf  
 A wood lot in Danvers  
 A wharf & ware house upon the long wharf.









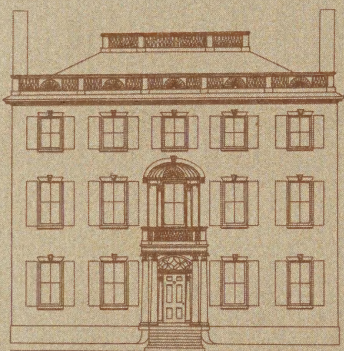




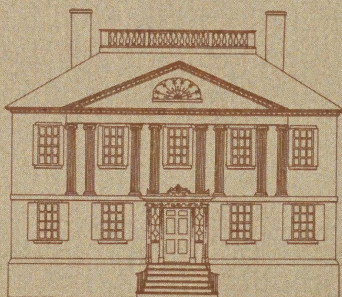


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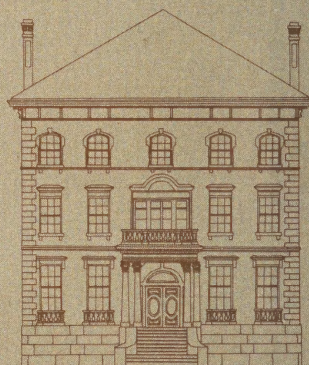
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